

Message Text

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41

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NEAE-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 SCCT-01 OMB-01 TRSE-00 ACDA-07 /079 W

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P R 291412Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2467

INFO AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, IS, US

SUBJECT: U.S. CONTACTS WITH THE PLO

1. THE GOVERNMENT PRESS OFFICE JULY 28 ISSUED THE FOLLOWING TEXT REGARDING ISRAELI REGRET AT U.S. CONTACT WITH THE PLO. BEGIN TEXT: THE GOVERNMENT OF SRAEL CONVEYS ITS REGRETS TO THE U.S. STATE DEPARTMENT CONCERNING THE CONTACTS ESTABLISHED BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES AND THE PLO, ON THE EVACUATION OF AMERICAN NATIONALS FROM BEIRUT. AT THE SAME TIME IT IS NOTED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF ISRAEL THAT IT WAS INFORMED BY THE U.S. GOVERNMENT THAT THESE CONTACTS WERE MOTIVATED BY PURELY HUMANITARIAN GROUNDS, AND DENOTE NO CHANGE WHATSOEVER IN THE STAND OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT WITH REGARD TO THE PLO. END TEXT.

2. THE PRESS OFFICE ALSO ISSUED ON JULY 28 THE FOLLOWING SUMMARY OF RABIN'S REMARKS DURING A KNESSET DEBATE ON THE SAME SUBJECT. BEGIN TEXT: THERE IS A TENDENCY TO PRESENT A PICTURE WHICH AS A RULE IS MUCH DARKER THAN ACTUALLY CALLED FOR. AN EXAMPLE OF THIS IS THE DISTORTIONS PRESENTED BY THE MEDIA REPORTING ON THE UNITED STATES' RELATIONS WITH THE TERRORISTS. WHAT ARE THE FACTS? THE U.S. HAS CONTACTED THE TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS IN ORDER TO EXTRICATE ITS CITIZENS FROM BEIRUT WHICH IS IN TERRORIST HANDS. SHOULD THIS DEVELOP

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INTO POLITICAL CONTACT THAT WOULD BE A SERIOUS MATTER...

DO WE HAVE TO BE THE FIRST TO ARISE AND TELL THE WORLD;
THE AMERICANS ARE ENTERING INTO POLITICAL CONTACT, WHILE
THEY ARE DENYING THIS, WHILE THEY ARE UNDER OBLIGATION OF
AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN US, A MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING...? I AM
NOT ACCUSING ANYONE HERE, NOT NAMING ANYONE--BUT WE HAVE BEEN
WITNESSING THESE MANIFESTATIONS NOW FOR SOME TIME. END TEXT.

3. COMMENT: WHILE GOI REMAINS CONCERNED ABOUT U.S. CONTACT
WITH PLO (SEE TEL AVIV 5163), IT APPEARS TO BE MAKING AN
EFFORT TO DOWNPLAY THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SUCH CONTACT. RABIN'S
REMARKS OCCURRED DURING HIS REVIEW OF KNESSET DEBATE ON HIS
PERFORMANCE PRIOR TO KNESSET ADJOURNMENT FOR SUMMER RECESS.
AS SUCH, RABIN WOULD BE, OF COURSE, INCLINED TO PUT BEST FACE
ON ANY INDICATION OF EROSION IN U.S./ISRAELI RELATIONS, A
CORNERSTONE OF HIS FOREIGN POLICY, PARTICULARLY SINCE SINAI II
AGREEMENT. WHILE MUCH LOCAL PRESS REPORTING HAS BEEN CRITICAL
OF RABIN FOR ATTEMPTING TO MINIMIZE THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE
CONTACTS, SOME EDITORIALS HAVE DEEMPHASIZED THE POLITICAL
RAMIFICATIONS OF U.S.-PLO CONTACTS, WHILE NOTING APPARENT
CONFUSION BETWEEN ISRAEL'S WASHINGTON EMBASSY'S EXPRESSION
OF REGRET AND RABIN'S EQUANIMITY ON THE MATTER.
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